**ICT Integration Project: Social Constructivist Classroom**

Social constructivism is an approach to teaching and learning based on the premise that we learn, by fitting new information together with what we already know. Thus, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in. “Constructivist theorists believe that people learn best when they actively construct their own understanding” (Trinity College Dublin, n.d.).

Social constructivists emphasise the social contexts of learning and that knowledge is mutually built and constructed. Vygotsky believed that this life long process of development was dependent on social interaction and that social learning actually leads to cognitive development.

Vygotsky as the major proponent of the social constructivist approach theorised that students had a zone of proximal development where they “can perform a task under adult guidance or with peer collaboration that could not be achieved alone” (Trinity College Dublin, n.d.). This webquest supports that theory by utilising collaborative group work as students undertake the annotated map lesson using interactive white-board, and the video making exercise.

Scaffolded problem solving type activities form the basis of the webquest. Students must interpret and process the information they source from the internet. The webquest facilitates and supports this process by providing links for the students to locate information and examples and resources that support the project based learning. This is social constructivism at work.

The information learner's find on the Internet becomes knowledge when it is interpreted and processed by the human brain. This can be facilitated through a constructivist approach where the teacher provides scaffolding and guidance.

The development of a travel itinerary requires students to problem solve the organisation of an authentic task. The student is required to interact with the webspiration software in order to collate and organise their information in a meaningful way. This task requires the students to reflect on what they have already learned and what else they will need to establish in order to complete the task, in this way they are constructing their own learning.

The social constructivist approach also favours portfolio type assessments and values learning processes over products. This ICP project rubric involves assessing students primarily on process (investigating, conducting and planning) in addition to the final product. It is a portfolio type assessment as multiple work samples including a video presentation, webspiration brainstorm, white-board flipchart and PowerPoint presentation form the basis of the assessment.

**Reference**

*Trinity College Dublin* (n.d.) *ICT’s in education.* Retrieved from

http://www.tcd.ie/Education/ICT/unit02/explanation01.htm